



Books are like rainbows; there are treasures hidden in them.



**What's your
cover?**



Any ordinary eleven year-old girl would most likely be spending their Friday night having a sleepover party at their best friend's house. But one girl decides to spend her weekend on a life risking journey. She is an adopted child, anxious to meet her birth parents, and she will do everything it takes to let that happen. As the journey continues, she will find herself stuck in risky situations and she will be forced to make hard decisions. As time goes on, she will learn many things about herself she had never known before. The main purpose of this adventure will **not** only be to actually find her parents, but she will also learn to express her true self to the readers and the people that surround her.

It was 3:00 in the afternoon and I, Kendell Cole, had just gotten home from school. Middle school had just started a month ago and I could already tell that sixth grade year was going to be a long, hard year. My mother always told me not to worry and that everything would be okay. I just wished that her words were reality.

Not to mention, I was adopted by a married couple who never had children. I call them "mother" and "father"; Rose and Gregory Cole at the age of five. My birth parents surrendered me to the NHO, *National House of Orphans*, in New York only being a ten month old baby. I remembered nothing about them and I was told that they gave up on me because both their incomes combined still would not be able to provide enough care or food to raise me. The only remains I have of my biological mother is a silver anklet that she supposedly clipped onto my ankle the day I was born. The caregivers of the orphanage told me that my mother wanted me to cherish it until my last breath; it would symbolize that everything would be okay, and that there was always hope for me.

As I readjusted my anklet, jingly, silver, and delicate, which always took place on my left ankle, I quickly ran downstairs to see why my mother was repeatedly calling my name.

"Kendell! Come down here!," she yelled from downstairs.

"Coming mother!," I yelled back.

The myriad of steps on the stairs made my legs tired. By the time I reached the bottom, I was laggard. Slowly walking to the kitchen, I saw mother eating her daily evening snack, Wheat Thin Crackers and seasoned olives; yuck!

"Yes, what might you need mother?" I asked curiously.

"Well, Mrs. Bellfern called to see if you wanted to have a sleepover with Anna tonight, since it is Friday."

I thought about my secret plan to fly all the way across the country. But I wasn't sure how to respond without giving any suspicious hints.

"Um, tell her I said no thanks. Maybe another time."

"Why not? You usually like spending time with her. It's a perfect time especially because we aren't doing anything special this weekend."

"But mother, we go to each others' houses' almost every week. I feel that I spend too much time with her. Can't you comprehend that I need alone time also mother?"

"Okay, but I just want you to remember what Anna has gone through. If she is able to smile, it's because she know that she actually has a friend, and that's you. Her social skills are not very well developed yet. She needs you."

I nodded calmly at my mother's words and I left the kitchen heading for the dreadful stairs, again.

I didn't want to tell her what I really thought about Anna. Plus, I kept my plan to go to California a secret. I mean sure, she's nice and all, but she can be really annoying at times. She's strange in a way that I can't really explain. Like in math class yesterday, she asked me the most random question.

She asked, "Why do penguins regurgitate food?"

I didn't want to answer, considering the fact that we were in math class learning about the importance of fractions, and that I had no idea why penguins regurgitate food. What does regurgitate mean anyways? It's like her mind is almost instantly out of focus. It also annoys me how whenever we have our so called "play dates" she always wants to play with stuffed animals. Anna finds it fun to pretend that Mr. Teddy and Pooh are having a tea party. I mean, seriously? That was the case by in the day, like in first grade. But then come to think of it, I do feel sort of bad for her, she has to face a hard life. Since both her parents passed away in a car accident four years ago, she now lives with her widowed aunt, Mrs. Bellfern. Having to witness the death of loved ones must be difficult. I guess it's not the same having to live with someone who isn't your own parent. I wouldn't blame her for being quite strange. Well, what am I

thinking? It's not like I would know. Take a look at yourself Kendell. Why am I even talking to myself? Anyways, I finished all my homework, and we have off school the weekend plus Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday for some Jewish holiday. So that gives me about five days to get on a plane to California, find my birth parents, and come back. Wow, that's a lot of work to do. How am I going to find enough money for the trip? How could I go without getting caught by my parents? Ah, don't worry Kendell, you can do this. After hours of thinking, I finally came up with a plan. First I'd have to find a way to sneak into my parents' bedroom and grab the huge stack of cash they secretly keep in a secret box under the bed. It's 4:30 in the evening, father's still at work, and mother's probably out for her daily jog. It's a perfect chance! I slowly crept into the big, deluxe room, trying not to make a noticeable squeak. The gold, shimmery walls intimidated my silent entrance. Trying not to make a noticeable squeak, I walked on the silky marble floor, afraid of what might happen if I got caught. Halfway to the bed, I heard a door slam. Footsteps were making their way up the stairs. My heart was pounding in panic. I quickly slid under the bed to grab the delicate silver box full of cash in the thousands. I could hear the footsteps get louder and louder, which meant they were getting closer and closer. I prayed to God hoping it wasn't mother. Quickly, I grabbed the rectangular box and tried to escape out the door, attempting to sustain the silence. I saw the top of mother's curly blonde head peer through the stairwell. I fell to the floor, crawling quickly across the floor to my room. Luckily she did not see me. I collected my big blue backpack, black suitcase, brown shoulder bag, and pink hand purse. Securely placing the money in one of the pockets of my purse, I reached to my closet trying to find some clothes for me to bring i stuffed them into my bags. I packed everything i needed. From clothes, towels, teeth utensils, and soap, to a camera, and extra change.

I examined the dull, unamusing view of the perspective I had taking my first step into the modest airport. The area was mostly filled with adults, professional and fancy. Most of the men were wearing big dark suits, solid ties, and formal, shiny, black, dress shoes. The women were wearing either dark dress pants or dark skirts, all wearing blazers. Something about them intimidated me. Was it their attitude? Or the way they walked? I wasn't too sure but Mrs. Bellfern always said never to trust formally dressed people because all they want is your *dinero*; in other words, money. I never usually trusted her words, but remembering that would be very useful as this captivating journey continues. I went to the counter to order a ticket.

"One ticket to San Diego please." I said to the lady, hoping she wouldn't be suspicious.

"Gimme your passport." she muttered. Reaching into my purse, I grabbed my passport and placed it on the counter. Strangely, she did not say anything about my age, or about who I was traveling with. I was relieved and lucky.

As I stepped onto the solid ground, I could feel the warm breeze while watching the ripe palm trees sway left to right. The bright sun was shining on my luscious, curly, reddish hair.

"I did it.", I whispered to myself in excitement.

California was so different from Boston; in fact, they were total opposites! California is like living in Africa, it's incredibly hot. Meanwhile, Boston was just like any other state; it snows, it rains, and it's hot sometimes. I really wouldn't mind living in California. By the time I ended my daydreaming, I looked around to where Gus, Luis, and Mimi were.

"Guys! Guys?", I yelled.

I twirled my head around